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Chapter 7
PINK TO GRAY

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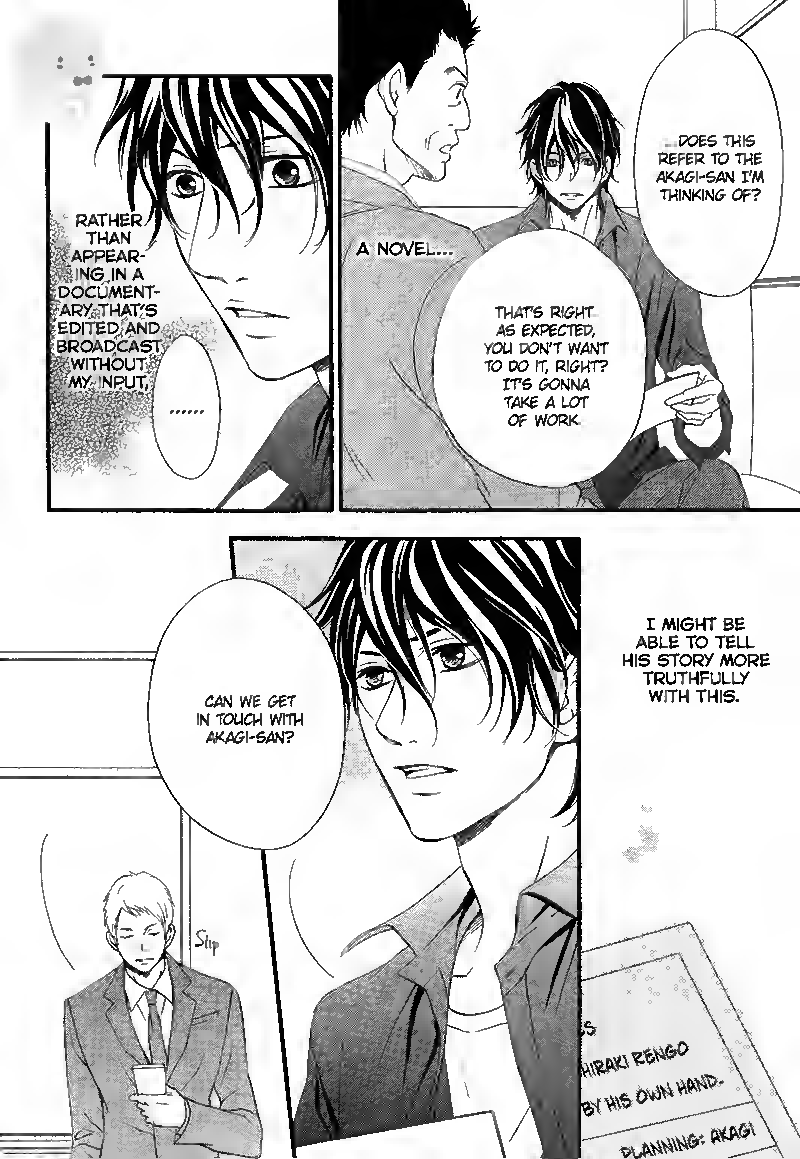
CHAPTER 7 CHAMPAGNE
第七章 シャンパン

# ピンクとグレー

原作:加藤シゲアキ 作画:藤崎みお
(NEWS)

IRONIC, ISN'T IT?
THE SAME PRODUCERS WHO ALWAYS REJECTED YOUR AUDITIONS NOW GIVE YOU OFFERS WITHOUT HESITATION.
YOU DON'T NEED TO DO EVERYTHING, BUT I INTEND TO HAVE YOU DO THE COMMERCIALLY BROADCASTED SHIRAKI RENGO MEMORIAL PROGRAM, AND YOUR DOCUMENTARY PRODUCED BY NHK
I CAN'T DO IT AS SKILLFULLY AS GOCCHI
YOU JUST HAVE TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THEY ASK

HONESTLY, I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT SHIRAKI RENGO AT ALL.
GOCCHI FULFILLED THE ROLE OF 'SHIRAKI RENGO' UNTIL THE END.
HE PROBABLY DOESN'T WANT IT TO BE DE-CONSTRUCTED POSTHUMOUSLY.
FLIP
THAT'S NOT IT..
BUT THE WORLD WANTS TO KNOW THE TRUTH...
THEY PROBABLY WOULDN'T FORGIVE ME IF I CONTINUE TO SEAL MY LIPS!
FLIP
KAWATORI DAI REVEALS
THE TRUTH ABOUT SHIRAKI RENGO
A NOVEL PENNED BY HIS OWN HAND.
PLANNING: AKAGI

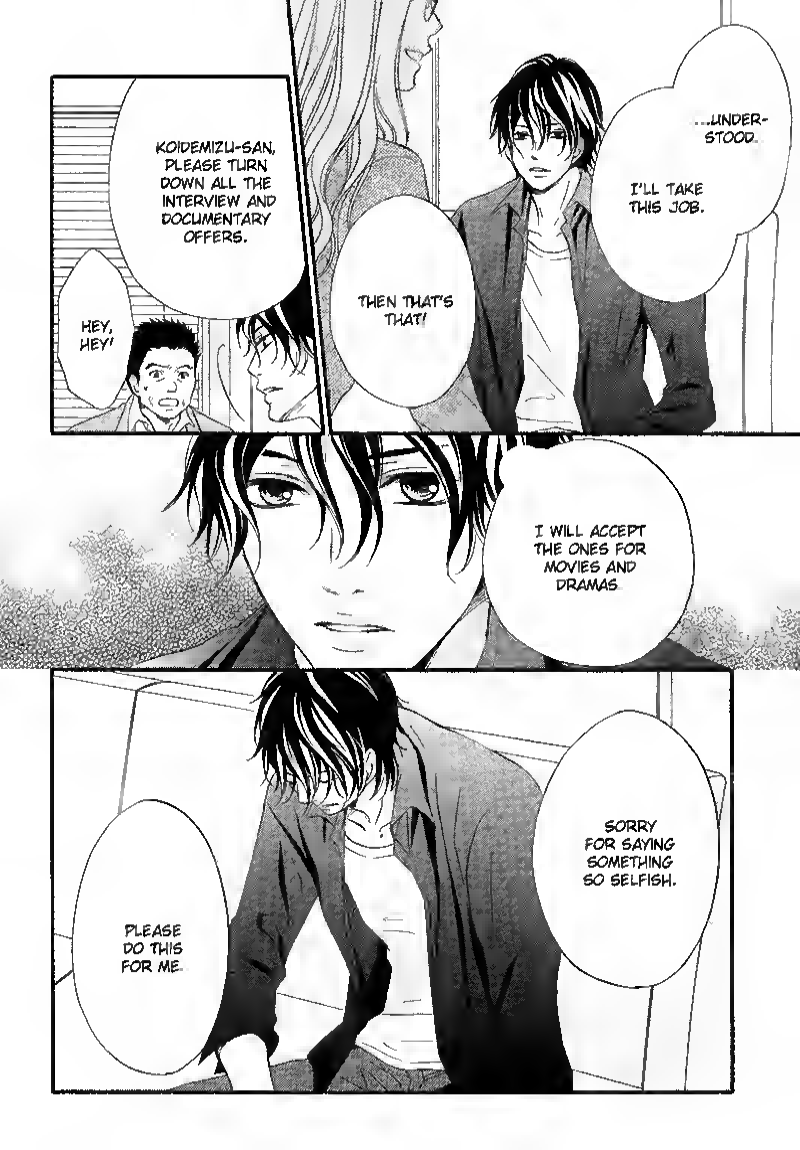

RATHER THAN APPEARING IN A DOCUMENTARY THAT'S EDITED AND BROADCAST WITHOUT MY INPUT,
.....
A NOVEL....
THAT'S RIGHT. AS EXPECTED, YOU DON'T WANT TO DO IT, RIGHT? IT'S GONNA TAKE A LOT OF WORK.
...DOES THIS REFER TO THE AKAGI-SAN I'M THINKING OF?
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO TELL HIS STORY MORE TRUTHFULLY WITH THIS.
CAN WE GET IN TOUCH WITH AKAGI-SAN?
Slip
HIRAKI RENGO
BY HIS OWN HAND.
PLANNING: AKAGI

THIS IS KAWATORI DAI'S MANAGER
YES. HE WANTS TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE PROJECT.
BUT IS IT REALLY ALL RIGHT FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME TO GO ON TV?
GIVE ME A BREAK. I'VE ALWAYS REGRETTED LETTING SHIRAKI GO
I SHOULD'VE KEPT HIM BY MY SIDE AND PICKED OUT JOBS FOR HIM... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO IF I LOSE YOU TOO?
THIS MOUNTAIN OF OFFERS IS NEITHER THE FRUIT OF MY EFFORTS NOR THE COMPANY'S...
IN THE END, I'M STILL JUST AN EXTRA WHO GETS ROLES BECAUSE OF SHIRAKI RENGO.
SHOULD I MAKE THE MOST OF THIS CHANCE...
OR SHOULD I TURN IT DOWN?

OPEN
AKAGI-SAN HAS ARRIVED.
HELLO
IT'S BEEN ABOUT HALF A YEAR.
YOU WERE RELEASED, SO PLEASE ANSWER YOUR MAIL.
I DELETED ALL MY MAIL AND MY CALL HISTORY.
.....
WELL THAT CERTAINLY SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING YOU'D DO.
Tap
SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK? WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY?

AKAGI-SAN, DO YOU THINK THAT I CAN DO THIS?
NO ONE ELSE CAN
YOU SHOULD DO THIS IF YOU STILL HAVEN'T FULLY SORTED THINGS OUT ABOUT HIM.
PLEASE ACCEPT BOTH THE GOOD AND BAD PARTS OF SHIRAKI RENGO.
GOOD AND BAD...
THUD

I CAN'T NOT DO IT, CAN I...?

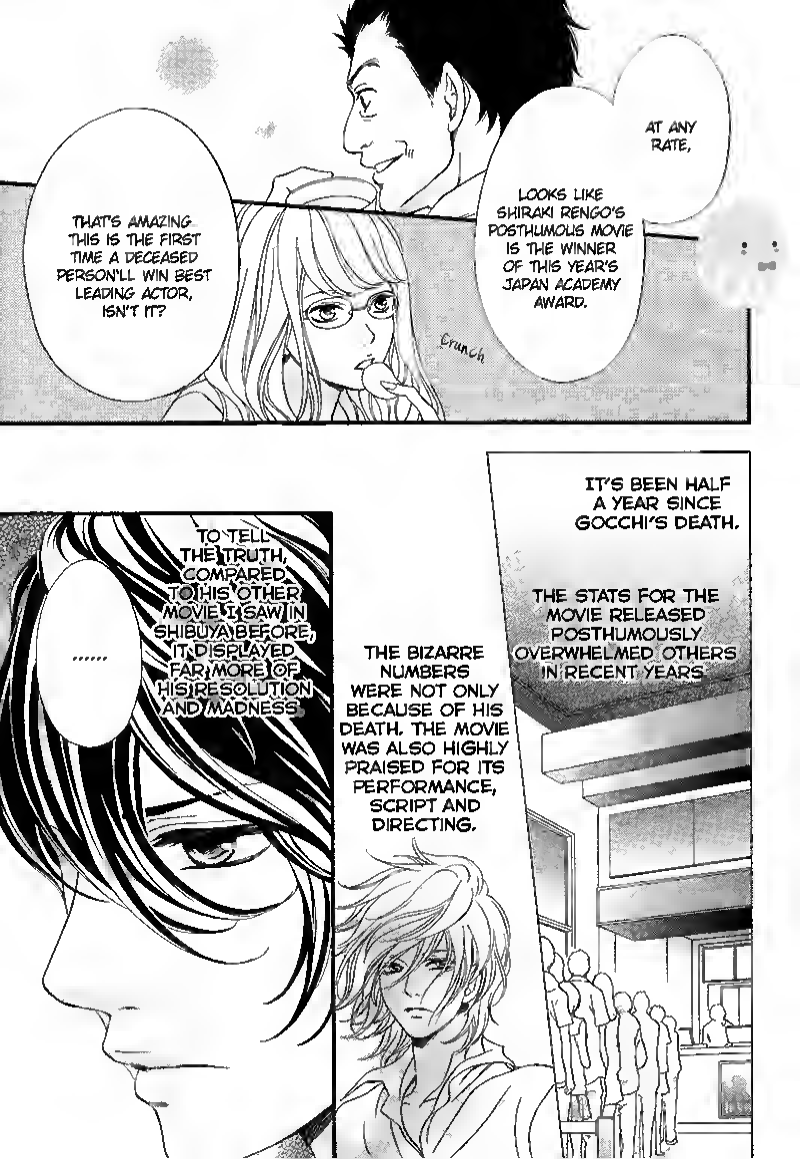

...UNDERSTOOD.
I'LL TAKE THIS JOB.
THEN THAT'S THAT!
KOIDEMIZU-SAN, PLEASE TURN DOWN ALL THE INTERVIEW AND DOCUMENTARY OFFERS.
HEY, HEY!
I WILL ACCEPT THE ONES FOR MOVIES AND DRAMAS.
SORRY FOR SAYING SOMETHING SO SELFISH.
PLEASE DO THIS FOR ME.

GUESS THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO
HAVE IT WRITTEN IN TWO MONTHS
I'LL TRY MY BEST
AND SO,
I ENDED UP WRITING THIS LITERATURE.

DURING MY WORK BREAKS, I REMINISCED ABOUT THE TIMES I SPENT WITH HIM IN PREPARATION FOR WRITING...
THAT IN ITSELF SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN TOO DIFFICULT,
HOWEVER, IT TOOK ALMOST THREE MONTHS TO TAKE FORM ENOUGH FOR ME TO PRESENT TO AKAGI-SAN.
Tap Tap

IT'S QUITE GOOD
HOW IS IT UP TILL THIS POINT?
SO ..?
I THOUGHT YOU'D DO WORSE
YOU DON'T LOOK IT, BUT YOU REALLY LIKE LITERATURE, HUH?
COMING FROM THE PERSON WHO ASKED ME TO DO IT?! YOU'RE TERRIBLE
I'VE ONLY WRITTEN THE TRUTH
GOOD OR BAD, IT'S NOT MY SKILL LEVEL.

THEN WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CALL IT?
A NON-FICTION NOVEL, OR BETTER, A DOCUMENTARY NOVEL PERHAPS...
IT COVERS LOVE TOO, SO IT'S DEFINITELY A TELL-ALL BOOK.
WELL, IT'S THE SECRETS OF SHIRAKI RENGO AND WRITTEN BY KAWATORI DAI! IT'S BOUND TO SELL WELL.
IT'S NOT A TELL-ALL BOOK.
I PUT MY HEART INTO WRITING THAT. DON'T JUST CATEGORIZE IT AS YOU LIKE.
WHAT A PAIN YOU ARE
I get it, okay
KOIDEMIZU-SAN STILL HAS DIFFICULTY DEALING WITH ME, BUT HE'S AS CARING AS ALWAYS.


AT ANY RATE,
LOOKS LIKE SHIRAKI RENGO'S POSTHUMOUS MOVIE IS THE WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S JAPAN ACADEMY AWARD.
THAT'S AMAZING. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME A DECEASED PERSON'LL WIN BEST LEADING ACTOR, ISN'T IT?
Crunch
IT'S BEEN HALF A YEAR SINCE GOCCHI'S DEATH.
THE STATS FOR THE MOVIE RELEASED POSTHUMOUSLY OVERWHELMED OTHERS IN RECENT YEARS.
THE BIZARRE NUMBERS WERE NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF HIS DEATH. THE MOVIE WAS ALSO HIGHLY PRAISED FOR ITS PERFORMANCE, SCRIPT AND DIRECTING.
TO TELL THE TRUTH, COMPARED TO HIS OTHER MOVIE I SAW IN SHIBUYA BEFORE, IT DISPLAYED FAR MORE OF HIS RESOLUTION AND MADNESS.
.....

AND THESE DAYS, KAWATORI DAI'S POPULARITY ISN'T LOSING OUT TO SHIRAKI RENGO'S.
HE DID SOME PRETTY COOL THINGS, HUH.
SEEING HIS EERIE PERFORMANCE, THE FILM CRITICS EVEN PRAISED HIM AS THE JAPANESE HEATH LEDGER.
PLEASE STOP WITH THAT.
YOU DID WELL WRITING THIS MUCH, DESPITE YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE
SORRY FOR ONLY MAKING IT HALF WAY.
JUST MAKE SURE TO FINISH IT PROPERLY. IF THE ENDING IS GOOD, THEN THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS

Kawatori Dai
TRUST
Shiraki R
I DON'T KNOW THE FINAL SALE TOTALS,
BUT I CAN GUESS THAT IT HAD QUITE THE REACTION, BASED ON THE OFFERS I RECEIVED FOR DRAMAS AND MOVIES.
HUH?

I'M TO TAKE THE ROLE OF SHIRAKI RENGO?
YES, I THINK THAT IT'LL BE INTERESTING.
ISN'T THAT GREAT, KAWATORI? PERFORMING SHIRAKI RENGO'S MOVIE...
THAT'S GOING TO BE A HOT TOPIC.
Right?
WHERE HAVE I SEEN THIS PRODUCER...?
!
"THAT'S INTERESTING."
RIGHT, HE'S THE ONE FROM BACK THEN...
flip
IS IT. FATE?

THE DAY SHIRAKI RENGO COMMITTED SUICIDE...

HOW WOULD I HAVE KNOWN I'D BE SELECTED TO STAR IN A MOVIE ONE YEAR LATER...

AND PLAYING THE ROLE OF SHIRAKI RENGO, ON TOP OF THAT.

THE PERSON NAMED SHIRAKI RENGO HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO FADE IN THIS WORLD.
ONE BY ONE, YOUNG TALENTS APPEAR.
IN THE FACE OF THESE NUMBERS, SHIRAKI RENGO BECOMES JUST ONE OF MANY.

"YOU HAVE TO BECOME FAMOUS."
THOSE WORDS WERE JUST LIKE A PROPHECY. GOCCHI MIGHT'VE WISHED FOR ME TO LIVE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY.
NO,
HE MIGHT'VE KNOWN THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN FROM THE BEGINNING.
I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THIS WORLD WHO CAN MAKE HIS HEART BEAT ONCE MORE.
I CAN'T NOT DO IT, CAN I?

I SHOULD PRESENT THINGS THE WAY THEY TRULY HAPPENED BETWEEN US.

MEANINGFUL BRIEFINGS AND RETAKES FOR THE SCREENPLAY...

THE LOCATION, COSTUMES, AND SET...

I WILL MAKE EVERYTHING TRUE TO WHAT I REMEMBER.

PREPARING ALL THAT WILL TAKE SEVERAL MONTHS.

Rrring
YES?
SORRY FOR THE SUDDEN INTERRUPTION, THIS IS KAWADA DAIKI SPEAKING.
KAWADA -KUN?!
YES, I WANTED TO COME VISIT YOU ONCE...
Swoosh
Ding dong

OPENS
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, KAWADA-KUN. THANKS FOR COMING BY.
Clink
I'M SORRY FOR EVERYTHING.
IT'S FINE, IT'S HIS FAULT. THOSE WHO TAKE THEIR OWN LIVES ARE THE MOST AT FAULT.
Clink
THAT BOY BUILT THIS...

Swoosh
...DO YOU HAVE A HOUSEHOLD ALTAR?
THIS WAY.
OPEN
EXCUSE ME
Click
THEY REALLY LOOK SIMILAR.

Chime
IS IT ALL RIGHT FOR ME TO PLAY HIS PART?
THIS CHAMPAGNE IS YOURS, ISN'T IT?
RIGHT, WOULD YOU LIKE TO OFFER THIS TO HIM TODAY?
SORRY, I READ THE SUICIDE NOTE ADDRESSED TO YOU
HOW DID YOU KNOW...

Suicide Note
Sorry Riva-chan
YOU HID IT VERY CAREFULLY NO WONDER THE POLICE DIDN'T FIND IT
OH...
HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE I..
WELL, YOU WROTE IT IN YOUR BOOK
Hmm.
YOU'RE APOLOGIZING ALL THE TIME
SORRY FOR WRITING THIS OF MY OWN ACCORD
OF COURSE.
I'M SORRY FOR NOT TELLING YOU YOU READ THE BOOK THEN?
Waft
BUT BE-CAUSE I READ YOUR BOOK, I REALIZED YOU WEREN'T LYING
THE SUICIDE NOTE FOR YOU WAS AT THE EXACT PLACE YOU WROTE IN THE BOOK I THOUGHT YOU WERE VERY SINCERE

I FEEL LIKE AN AQUARIUM CARETAKER TOO. A CARETAKER WHOSE MEDAKA FISH HAVE VANISHED... TWO TIMES AT THAT.
Rustle
IT'S THE SAME AS THAT TIME.
OH RIGHT, KAWADA -KUN. YOU WROTE THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW...
Swoosh
DIDN'T KNOW WHAT?
THE WORDS, "I HAVE TO DO IT. I CAN'T NOT DO IT"
THOSE WORDS ARE FROM YUI'S SUICIDE NOTE...
BEFORE SHE CUT THE VENTILATOR TUBE
SHE WROTE THIS... OR RATHER, SHE ARRANGED THE LETTERS TO SPELL THIS
Swish
PROBABLY IN THIS FASHION...

SHE ALIGNED THE COLORED PAPER SHE CUT AND LAID THE WORDS ON HER BED SHEET.
IT SAID, "THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING. I'M GLAD I WAS BORN. I'M GLAD I COULD DANCE.
AND I HAVE TO DO THIS I CAN'T NOT DO IT."
"YUI..."
"DOCTOR, YUI..."
IT WAS SO COLORFUL AND BEAUTIFUL, YOU ALMOST COULDN'T CALL IT A SUICIDE NOTE
YUI WAS ALWAYS THIS KIND OF CHILD IF THE QUESTION WAS TO DO IT OR NOT, SHE WOULD DEFINITELY DO IT
I SUPPOSE THIS INFLUENCED SHINGO.

I NEVER KNEW..
Pop
WAH!
OH MY, THAT MADE A LOUD SOUND!
LET'S DRINK IT TOGETHER.
ALL RIGHT, JUST A LITTLE.
Clink
CHEERS!

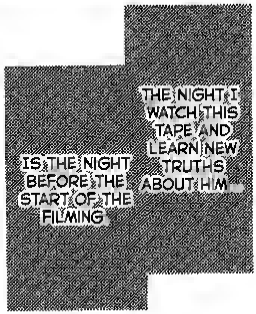
GOCCHI, WE'RE FINALLY DRINKING IT.
Gulp
AHHH...
THE BOOK WILL BE MADE INTO A MOVIE SOON
Swoosh
I SEE... I'M GLAD. EVEN THOUGH SHINGO DIED, HE'S STILL LIVING ON. THAT MAKES ME HAPPY.
YOU'RE WEAK TO ALCOHOL, HUH.
HOW EM-BARRASSING, I BET MY FACE IS BRIGHT RED.
THEY REALLY ARE PARENT AND CHILD.
REMINDS ME OF GOCCHI BACK THEN.

PFFT!
YOU CAN'T EMBRACE ME THOUGH, KAWADA -KUN.
Making me drink so much!
I GUESS THE DAY I BECOME GOCCHI'S DAD IS GETTING CLOSE, HUH!
HEHE
HA..

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
WOULD YOU LEND ME GOCCHI'S CLOTHES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS FOR THE SHOOTS?
OF COURSE THAT'S OKAY.
YOU CAN HAVE EVERYTHING. I'LL PREPARE THEM NOW.
I'LL HELP.
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
IT WAS NOTHING.
ALSO, THERE'S THIS...
IT'S THE VIDEO TAPE OF THE DANCE COMPETITION WHERE YU! HAD THE ACCIDENT.

SHINGO RECORDED IT AFTER YUI WAS HOSPITALIZED, HE WOULD OFTEN WATCH THIS RECORDING
IT WAS TOO PAINFUL FOR ME TO WATCH, BUT IF THIS CAN BE OF REFERENCE TO YOU, PLEASE WATCH IT.
Vroom
I'LL BE BORROWING THIS

SUZUKI-YUI....
HER TALENT FOR BALLET HAD BEEN BLOSSOMING SINCE CHILDHOOD AND SHE WON COMPETITION AFTER COMPETITION.
THAT EXPERIENCE ALLOWED HER TO PIONEER IN THE FIELD OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE.
HOW DID HIS SISTER INFLUENCE GOCCHI?
I WANT TO WATCH IT.
I'LL NEED A VHS PLAYER THOUGH.




✤ WHAT IS THE NEW TRUTH ABOUT GOCCHI...?!

つづく ★ To Be Continued ..